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Death in Dallas: A Plot That Backfired

We have unraveled the mystery of the century—who killed John F. Kennedy. We have studied evidence that had been covered up and interviewed previously silent witnesses. We will present our findings tonight in a television documentary. Here are the highlights:

The Central Intelligence Agency dispatched assassins to Cuba in 1961 to kill Fidel Castro. No written record was kept until May 14, 1962, when a summary was prepared for President Kennedy's brother Robert. The CIA kept one copy.

The killers were hand-picked by Santo Trafficante, who had been the Mafia boss in pre-Castro Havana. After six hit teams failed, the CIA reportedly learned that Trafficante had tipped off Castro. The CIA cut the Mafia out, but continued.

Without Trafficante's help, Castro no longer knew when or where the CIA would strike. In September 1963, he publicly warned that if the CIA continued its attempts to kill "Cuban leaders," then "American leaders will no longer be safe."

Participants in the plot against Castro claim that Castro then enlisted Trafficante to turn the Mafia against President Kennedy. Trafficante allegedly got the assistance of two other Mafia godfathers, Sam Giancana and Carlos Marcello, who hated Kennedy for his crackdown on the mob.

For such a crime, the Mafia needed someone to divert suspicion from themselves. They allegedly were led to Lee Harvey Oswald, a political crackpot who once defected to Russia. He had also been a Marine Corps sharpshooter. He would look like a misfit who could well have acted alone.

Two months after Castro's warning, Kennedy was killed in Dallas. The Mafia scheme, our sources say, was to pin the assassination on Oswald, then eliminate him before he could incriminate any conspirators. But the police found Oswald first.

The Mafia now needed to get rid of Oswald desperately. But who would shoot the prize prisoner? Such a killer would have to be crazy, or under terrible pressure. The man who did it, Jack Ruby, was a small-time hood under Mafia pressure, our sources said.

The CIA veteran who directed the abortive attempt to assassinate Castro, William Harvey, told his superiors that the operation had backfired against President Kennedy, associates said. Then-CIA Director John McCone shared this shocking report with Robert F. Kennedy and the new president, Lyndon B. Johnson, our sources said.

In the 1970s, a congressional committee investigated CIA use of Mafia hit men to kill Castro. Senate investigators asked questions about whether Castro used the Mafia to retaliate against Kennedy. The committee subpoenaed Santo Trafficante, Sam Giancana and the mobster who worked with Harvey, Johnny Rosselli.

Trafficante fled to the Caribbean, our sources said. But before Giancana and Rosselli could say anything that might link Trafficante to Dallas, they were slain. Police concluded from the evidence that the men were hit by Trafficante. Trafficante, who died in 1987, refused to answer committee questions.

Why would Trafficante want to silence Giancana and Rosselli? Both could link him to the tragedy in Dallas.